

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Korea

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE DISTR. 20 FEB 50

SUBJECT Shortage of Salt in North Korea

NO. OF PAGES 1

25X1

PLACE
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1

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1. Salt for North Korea is produced in state-controlled factories at Kwangnyangman (125-14, 38-48), South Pyongan Province; Monggumno (124-46, 38-12), Hwanghae Province; Kojo (127-54, 38-58), Kwangwon Province; Sohojin (127-38, 39-50) and Hongwon (127-58, 40-02), South Hamgyong Province; and Chongjin (129-49, 41-46) and Najin (130-15, 42-10), North Hamgyong Province. Their total annual production of 50,000 sok (a measure of capacity equivalent to about forty gallons) is not sufficient for North Korea, however, and about 200,000 sok has to be imported from eastern Manchuria.
2. Because of the bad harvest* in North Korea in the fall of 1949, it became necessary to import extra grain supplies from Manchuria. In payment for this grain, North Korea exported salt, which is also in short supply this year in Manchuria. Exports were so large that no salt ration could be issued. Inhabitants of the coastal areas have been making their own salt from sea water, and on the black market one tu of salt can be exchanged for three of rice.
3. As a secondary result of the salt shortage, fish from the east coast of North Korea cannot be salted and instead are being used as fertilizer. The fishing industry, which supplies considerable export products for Manchuria and other countries, has also suffered.

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Comment. Crop failures because of drought were reported [redacted]

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Approved For Release 2003/08/05 :
Next Review Date

Document No. **007**
 No Change In Class. ☐
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 Class. Changed To: TS S C 25X1
 Authority: 25X1-506550008-0
 Date: **6 June 78** By: **100**